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OBITUARY.

HON. ORLANDO B. POTTER.

The Hon. Orlando B. Potter, one of the oldest and most esteemed members of the American Geographical Society and a member of its Council, passed suddenly from life to death, apparently in robust health, on the 2d day of January, 1894. For many years identified with the business interests and prosperity of the City of New York, always foremost in whatever tended to advance the welfare of the city and the good of its citizens, irreproachable in all the relations of life, eminently successful in his business undertakings, keenly alive to everything that promoted the public good, untiring in his efforts to contribute, by his strong individuality and unflinching defence of the right to the maintenance of a healthy public sentiment, he has left the impress of his character upon the city of his adoption. It is impossible for any one to make a careful analysis of the attributes of such a man without arriving at the conviction that his death is a public calamity. It is at the same time no easy task to form a just estimate of his influence in the daily life of the metropolis. This influence does not appear on the surface. He possessed a thorough knowledge of law, but there were many who achieved greater fame in that profession. He was a conscientious and forceful legislator, but there were many who held a higher rank as statesmen. By good judgment, diligence and perseverance he accumulated a large fortune, but there were many who

possessed a much larger income. Yet, as a lawyer, a legislator and financier, few have exhibited more eminent ability. In all respects, on all occasions, and throughout a long and successful career, he was pre-eminently practical. He seldom or never committed an error of judgment ; on the contrary, wherever and whenever the opportunity presented itself, he developed the characteristics of a born leader of men. Self-reliance was the dominant trait of his character.

The influence that such a man exerts is not always apparent, but is always powerful ; wherever he led, men followed to their own advantage. He, however, had no need and no desire for a following. It is the following that goes to make the reputation of most men. Mr. Potter was early taught self-reliance in the severe school of adversity. To one of strong mental and physical faculties this is perhaps after all the best school for the training of the leaders of men. The great metropolis was the proper field for the exercise of his remarkable activities. With the eye of intuition he could see its future greatness and was quick to embrace the opportunities that presented themselves. While studying his own interests he never lost sight of the greater interests of the city, and was always foremost in voice and action to do his part to add to its pride and glory as the metropolis of the Western World. As regards its future he was always a pronounced optimist even in times of the deepest financial and business depression.

It may be truly said that no man's biography is worth writing or reading that does not contain some lesson that may be useful to those who come after him. Mr.

Potter's life was full of lessons—lessons of what a man can accomplish who has a firm faith in himself. In his youth he looked adversity in the face without a tremor of fear or anxiety, and in his later life he lived in the atmosphere of affluence the quiet life of a philosopher. His whole career was marked by a stern business integrity, a marvellous perseverance, a clear judgment and a prompt decision. His remarkable success in life was the result of all these—and these are the lessons his life teaches.

His warm devotion to the study and diffusion of geographical knowledge made him a useful and valued Fellow of the American Geographical Society, and a member of its Council. Zealous at all times to promote its objects, and above all things enjoying his seat among the large audiences that attend the winter season lectures, he never tired of discussing the influences upon these audiences of the annual course of scientific papers, feeling that in this one particular the Society was accomplishing a great public good. He was most anxious to see its valuable library and collection of maps in a fire-proof building, and expressed his wish to make a very liberal contribution for that purpose when the plans were ready to be undertaken. His associates will long miss his kindly and earnest counsels with a feeling that the world is better that such men live.

E. L. V.